



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

February 23, 2004

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – AZIZA GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Aziza Group Home (Aziza). Aziza contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation). Aziza is a six-bed facility located in the Fourth Supervisorial District, which provides care for boys ages 14-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Aziza was providing services for four Los Angeles County DCFS children.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to verify that Aziza was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues and included an evaluation of Aziza's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with two children placed with Aziza at the time of the review. The interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by Aziza and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, Aziza is providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. However, we noted that the Agency needs to make several repairs within the facility; include placement workers in the development and modification of Needs and Services Plans; provide in-service training to staff regarding appropriate interactions with residents and monitor their behavior; and document clothing expenditures for each resident.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management has agreed to provide DCFS with a written corrective action plan within 15 business days from the receipt of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact DeWitt Roberts at (626) 293-1101.

JTM:DR:CC

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
Javaid Aslam, Executive Director, Aziza Group Home
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

AZIZA GROUP HOME
2611 Rising Star Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765
Phone: 909-869-0412
License No.: 197800917
Rate Classification Level: 9

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Aziza is a single-story house located in a residential neighborhood. The home was nicely maintained and blended in with other homes in the neighborhood. However, the garage door needed painting, the patio area in the backyard had large cracks in the cement, presenting a safety hazard, and the backyard lawn was brown and dry.

The interior of the home was moderately maintained with bedrooms personalized by the residents. However, some areas needed improvement.

In the recreation room, there was no lighting, the end table did not have its veneer top, and the drapes were dirty. In the living room, the mini blinds were dirty with slats missing and the sofa was dirty. In the dining room, a light bulb cover was missing from the overhead fixture and, in the hallway, the tile floor was buckled. In the resident bathroom, the door was dirty and the bathtub's porcelain was chipped and dirty. In addition, the walls in the living and dining rooms, hallway, and bathroom were dirty.

In bedroom number one, the walls were dirty and the dresser was missing a drawer. In bedroom number two, there was paint on a dresser and, in bedroom number three, there was writing on the dressers, insufficient lighting, the bedroom door was cracked, and the back of one dresser was coming off. In addition, the carpet in the resident bedrooms was dirty and stained, only one bed had a full complement of linens (bottom sheet, top sheet, and a blanket), most of the bed pillows were dirty, and the mini-blinds in each room were broken.

There was age-appropriate play equipment in the home including board games, computers, books, a TV, VCR, and basketball hoop. However, the basketball hoop was located on dirt, which made playing difficult. Management stated that the area was scheduled be concreted but gave no time table.

There was a sufficient supply of food appropriately dated and properly stored.

Recommendations

1. Aziza management:

- a. Paint the garage door.**
- b. Repair cracks in the patio area.**
- c. Reseed and maintain backyard lawn.**
- d. Provide sufficient lighting in the recreation room and bedroom number three.**
- e. Repair/Replace furniture throughout the facility as needed.**
- f. Clean the drapes in the recreation room and clean the living room sofa.**
- g. Repair/Replace the mini blinds in the living room and all three bedrooms.**
- h. Clean the walls in the common areas and the residents' bedrooms.**
- i. Replace light bulb cover in the dining room.**
- j. Repair/Replace the hallway floor tile.**
- k. Repair the bathtub and clean the door in the resident bathroom.**
- l. Clean and repair carpeting in the residents' bedrooms.**
- m. Replace all dirty bed pillows and provide each bed with a full complement of linens.**
- n. Repair the door in bedroom number three.**
- o. Cement area around the basketball court.**

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two**Comments:**

The residents met Aziza's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement and received an initial diagnostic assessment.

The Needs and Service Plans (NSPs) were realistic, measurable, and time specific. However, there was no documentation that placement workers participated in the development and the modification of the NSPs. We discussed this with management who stated that the Agency's social worker usually completed the forms and had the placement workers review and sign them when they came for their monthly visit. Management did not know why the process was not completed.

The Quarterly Reports were current and focused on the goals in the NSPs.

The residents received individual and group therapy.

Recommendation

- 2. Aziza management include the residents' placement workers in the development and modification of the Needs and Services Plans.**

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews****Sample size for resident interviews: Two****Comments:**

The residents attended school and their records contained report cards and/or progress reports. The residents reported that they were provided with assistance with their school work and that staff was supportive of their academic progress.

Development of daily living skills was part of Aziza's program. The residents were involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals, hygiene care was discussed as needed, and employment preparation encouraged.

The residents were not eligible for emancipation services or vocational training programs. The residents did not work and could spend their allowances as they wanted.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Aziza followed a monthly activity schedule developed by the staff and residents. The residents were encouraged to participate in activities they desired and had the opportunity to watch television, play games, and read at free times during the day.

Transportation was provided to and from activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

There were four residents placed in Aziza at the time of the review. A review of case files was not conducted as there were no residents prescribed psychotropic medications.

Comments:

According to documentation, there were no residents receiving psychotropic medications. This was confirmed by management.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents were presented with the policies, rules, and regulations of the facility. The residents reported that some staff members were disrespectful and would get in their face trying to make them do something bad. This was discussed with management who stated that there was training to teach staff how to appropriately interact with residents without conflict. One resident stated that the rules were not fair, but could not offer an example of when the rules and consequences were not fairly meted out.

One resident reported that he did not feel safe in the home because he was the youngest and blamed for everything by the other residents. He further reported that he was physically assaulted by former residents. This was discussed with management who confirmed that the resident had been intimidated and assaulted by former residents. Law enforcement was contacted but the resident refused to press charges. The residents stated that there was a sufficient number of staff always in the home when residents were present and rated the physical facility as “poor.”

Resident chores included the maintenance of their own rooms and common areas which the residents did not feel were too demanding.

Both residents were able to have telephone contact with their placement workers and reported that there was privacy during visits and telephone calls. Both indicated that they had religious freedom and that their health care needs were met.

Both residents were aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendation

- 3. Aziza management provide on-going in-service training to staff regarding appropriate interactions with the residents and monitor their behavior.**

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Clothing for both residents met DCFS clothing standards for quantity. Clothing logs confirmed that at least fifty dollars every month was allocated for clothing purchases for one resident but there was no documentation of clothing purchases for the other resident. No explanation was given by management as to why there was no documentation.

The residents received at least the required minimum weekly allowance that they could increase based on the Agency's behavioral system.

Aziza provided residents with personal care items and sufficient, secure space to store their personal items.

Both residents were provided the opportunity to maintain a life book.

Recommendation

- 4. Aziza management document clothing expenditures for each resident.**